

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-9 (Cancelled)

10. (Original) A method of forming an electrode layer for a flat capacitor, the method comprising:

 placing a sheet between a punch and a die having a die hole;

 delivering a lubricant to a periphery of the die hole, wherein the lubricant is concentrated to a pre-determined location on the periphery; and

 actuating the punch to punch an electrode layer out of the sheet.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein delivering a lubricant includes delivering a fluorinated or partially fluorinated fluid.

12. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein placing a sheet includes placing a sheet having an aluminum oxide portion and an aluminum portion, the lubricant being concentrated on the periphery of the die hole at the location where the punch cuts through the aluminum portion.

13-52. (Cancelled)

53. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein delivering the lubricant to the periphery of the die hole includes providing a lubrication dam located around the periphery of the die hole and communicating with a lubrication inlet, the lubrication dam configured to concentrate a lubricant at the pre-determined location on the periphery of the die hole.

54. (New) The method of claim 53, wherein the dam includes a ridge located about an upper surface of the die hole.

55. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the pre-determined location is less than 1/4 of the total perimeter length of the periphery of the die hole.

56. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the lubricant is compatible with a chemistry of the sheet such that the lubricant does not need to be cleaned off of the electrode layer after being punched.

57. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the lubricant includes a FluorinertTM fluid.

58. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein placing the sheet between the punch and the die includes placing the sheet between the punch and the die, the punch guided by a punch guide, there being no stripper plate between the punch guide and the die.

59. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein actuating the punch includes actuating the punch upwardly.

60. (New) The method of claim 10, further comprising picking the punched electrode layer out of a back side of the die.

61. (New) The method of claim 60, wherein a top surface of the punch extends through the die above the second side of the die before the electrode layer is taken off of the punch.

62. (New) The method of claim 60, wherein the punched electrode layer includes an aluminum oxide portion and an aluminum tab portion and wherein picking the punched electrode layer includes picking the electrode layer off of the punch using a vacuum member having two independent vacuum ports, one port located to attach to the aluminum oxide portion and one port located to attach to the aluminum tab portion.

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Serial Number: 10/731,882

Filing Date: December 9, 2003

Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR CUTTING ELECTRODE FOIL LAYERS

Page 4

Dkt: 279.630US1

63. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the electrode layer is punched out of the sheet without applying any compression forces on the sheet before the punch contacts the sheet.